



February 21, 2014

This week's edition includes important information I want to share with you:

- **Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Budget Hearing – House Health Committee:** On Wednesday, I had the opportunity to present Governor Haslam's recommended budget for DIDD to the House Health Committee, chaired by Representative Bob Ramsey. You can view the hearing video [here](#); the DIDD budget hearing begins 27 minutes into the video.

I was pleased to see so many familiar faces in the chairs behind me and the support provided to DIDD as we presented our FY 2014-15 budget to members of the House of Representatives. This hearing was the first of three presentations that my team and I will make to legislative committees on our budget. Providing detailed information to the legislature and public is so important to ensure an understanding of the complicated service delivery system in which we all work. My team and I are committed to working closely with legislators and affected stakeholders as we support this budget through the legislative process.

- **East Provider Manual Roll-Out:** This meeting, previously scheduled for February 14, was canceled due to inclement weather. The roll-out has now been rescheduled for March 6, 2014 from 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. at the American Museum of Science and Energy (300 S. Tulane Ave., Oak Ridge, 37830).
- **E-Toolkit Available on Web:** The department, in partnership with the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center and Boling Center, was awarded a Special Hope Foundation grant to develop electronic tools to assist primary care providers in supporting health care for people with disabilities. Based on Canadian primary care guidelines for adults with developmental disabilities and tools used to implement them, the electronic healthcare tools are divided into four categories: General Issues; Physical Health Issues; Checklists; and Behavioral and Mental Health Issues including two tools outlining approaches for behavioral crises. In addition to physicians, nurses and other clinical providers, this information can empower people with disabilities, their families and direct support professionals to better advocate for their health care. The Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) Toolkit is now available [here](#).
- **Educational Webinar:** The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), in collaboration with the Disability & Elderly Public Health Group within the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), invite you to an educational webinar for state policymakers and disability policy stakeholders to discuss recent Federal policy guidance issued by CMS. The webinar, *Implications of HCBS Final Rule on Non-Residential Settings-The Impact of New HCBS Guidance on Employment and Day Services* will include a brief presentation by CMS followed by a highly interactive dialogue to address questions on the impact of Federal policy developments on state systems-change efforts related to improving integrated employment and community-based engagement of persons with significant disabilities. The webinar will be held Thursday, February 27 from 2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. EST. To register, click [here](#).
- **Employment First Accolades:** The Work Incentives Counseling Initial Training Program will be held at the Opryland Hotel in Nashville from February 24-February 28. We would like to commend Progress Inc. for successfully registering three of their staff members. Susan Hutchison, Paula Daniels and Liza Zeman will be attending the training session. This demonstrates Progress' dedication to the *Employment*

First initiative and people they support. Good luck Progress! We are certain you will be successful in the training session.

- **Employment First Community of Practice Webinars:** Beginning in March, Tennessee will launch a series of webinars focused on integrated employment. The series will run March 10-December 15, 2014 with topics such as organizational assessment, diversifying funding streams, measuring progress/data collection, promoting evidence-based practices, customized employment and more. All webinars will be held from 1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m. CST. On March 10, a presenter (announced soon) will kick-off the series with an inspirational introduction on her experience with transforming her agency's service delivery system to align with the *Employment First* initiative which includes integrated employment job placements.

Each webinar will be highlighted monthly in *Open Line*; however, registration is limited to 25 participants and is on a first-come, first-serve basis. To RSVP for the March 10 webinar, please contact Amy Gonzalez, State Director of Employment and Day Services, at Amy.Gonzalez@tn.gov by March 3 at 5:00 p.m. CST.

To provide feedback and ask questions, participants will need to call 615-741-1193 or 1-877-214-0097. To view the webinars, participants will need to enter this link in their web browser: <http://stateoftennessee.adobeconnect.com/empdaysvcs/>. Select the option to enter as guest, type in your first and last name and click on the option to enter the meeting room. If you have never connected to an Adobe Connect meeting before on your computer, please test your connection prior to the meeting [here](#). You may be prompted to install an Adobe Connect Add-In, which may take a few minutes to download and install. You may also need to temporarily disable your pop-up blocker. Please contact DIDDHelpdesk@tn.gov if you need any assistance.

- **Statewide Tennessee Employment Consortium (S-TEC):** On February 26, S-TEC will be held at Clover Bottom (One Cannon Way basement, 275 Stewarts Ferry Pike, Nashville) from 1:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m. Agenda items will include grant updates on the Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP), Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) and the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI). Additionally, regional updates will be provided and the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) will discuss their letters of agreement (LOA) process and supported employment program. For those unable to travel, please dial 615-741-1193 or 1-877-214-0097. We look forward to seeing everyone there!
- **New Funding Opportunity:** The Kessler Foundation is seeking proposals from qualified public and non-profit teams experienced in survey research and design to conduct a comprehensive survey on the employment status of working age persons with disabilities. The objective of this nationally representative survey is to inform the general public, disability advocates, the business community, government, funders and others about the status of employment for persons with disabilities.

Candidates are expected to design the survey instrument as well as sampling and data collection methodologies; select or acquire survey samples; collect, process and analyze data; and prepare a written report of survey results. The project is expected to begin on or about June 1, 2014 and must be completed by April 30, 2015. Deadline for proposals is March 3, 2014. For more information, click [here](#).

Be safe and have a great weekend!

~Debbie